

Corl's Store
208 Coleridge Avenue
Llyswn Neighborhood
Altoona
Blair County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5880

HABS
PA
7-ALTO
125

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

CORL'S STORE

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Location: 208 Coleridge Avenue

Date of Erection: 1916

Description: A recent conversion into apartments has totally obscured the original appearance of this store. The basic form is a two-story rectangular box, horizontally separated into store and living quarters. The shallow, hipped roof has a sharp peak, and minor gables on the south and east. The porch dates to at least the 1930s, but until last year the columns on the first level were metal posts. The proportions of the porch are original, and reflect the high ceiling of the old store. In the remodelling, the right entry was moved to its present location behind a pillar. The front walk and porch step indicate the old store entry, between plate-glass display windows that stretched nearly from floor to ceiling. The door on the left opens to the stairway leading to the upstairs apartment.

History: The Corl family ran a general store in Greenwood and a grocery store on 4th Avenue when they bought this lot in 1915 for \$790. The building first appears on tax records in 1916 in the name of Mary F. Corl, listed as a nonresident, but the deed is in the names of Henry and Clare Corl, proprietors of the 4th Avenue store. Jacob Miller, a buyer for Gable's department store who lived on Browning Avenue and occasionally speculated in real estate, bought the store for \$2,900 in 1919 and sold it to William Hartman two years later for \$4,500. Hartman ran the store and lived in the rooms above it for several years, perhaps continuing to live there even after he sold the enterprise to E. A. Caum, president of Caum Ice Cream Company, in 1926. A grocer named Hugh Hershey bought Caum out in 1929, and lived above the store with his wife, Rhea, for three years. Many long-term local residents remember that this was once Hartman's store, and several recall another storekeeper or two after him, but for the vast majority of Llysweners, 208 Coleridge Ave. has always been Schmittle's Clover Farms Store. Robert and Leone Schmittle bought Hershey out in August 1932. They started out as general merchandisers before affiliating with the Clover Farms grocery chain based in Tyrone, Pennsylvania. The chain was formed in 1929 with sixty-six individual grocers in the area as members. Stores were distinguished by green and ivory storefronts. The Schmittles had a meat counter and continued to carry hardware and dry goods in addition to groceries. They kept their store open until 9 P.M., and delivered all over town. In those days, Llyswen had only dirt roads, no sidewalks, and no street lights. Coleridge Avenue had only a narrow asphalt strip down its center, with cinders on either side. In 1943 the Schmittles bought the bungalow across the street at 211 Coleridge Ave., but rented it out until 1947. They moved in that year and stayed until 1950, but slow business induced them to move back above the store. In March 1974 they retired to their bungalow and sold the store to Charlie Warner, who moved in upstairs and kept the store open for another two or three years. In 1989 the Warners remodelled the building into rental apartments.

Sources: Maps: 1920, 1932, 1951. City directories. Tax records. Deed books: 176/290, 235/536, 260/352, 289/6, 350/92, 380/89, 411/99, 958/730. Altoona Mirror (August 6, 1949), 44. Interview: Bob and Leone Schmittle, 211 Coleridge Ave., August 19, 1989.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), Randy Cooley, director. An overview of the history of the city (HABS No. PA-5784) and an overview of Llyswen (HABS No. PA-5787) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the city and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Kathy Edwards in the summer of 1989 under the supervision of Alison K. Hoagland, HABS historian, and Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian. Edwards's and other project historians' work was published as Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990), edited by Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian, and Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.